



## BLUFFTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**THRU:** Anthony Barrett  
Town Manager

**FROM:** Colonel David F. McAllister  
Chief of Police

**RE:** Briefing Memorandum – Public Safety Committee

**DATE:** June 21, 2010

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#### **BACKGROUND:**

The Town of Bluffton has had a Public Safety Committee since at least the mid- 1970's. The committee was formed by Town Council and in over its life its role has evolved. At one time, the group served as a policy writing group for the Police Department and would appear before Council to advocate for items the PD needed. At times the group would find themselves advocating for larger budgets, equipment, etc. that may have been opposition to the position of council. As the town grew and developed its police department, the need for that type of committee diminished and the group had difficulty finding a new role. It served as a citizen group that received monthly reports from both the PD and the Fire Department but lacked a clear direction. The original committee was disbanded by former Mayor Johnston at the end of his term as mayor. Interest is still there for a Public Safety Committee so I was tasked with researching and making a recommendation for what a new group might look like and what its proper role might be. To complete this task, I conducted extensive research including polling other departments and interviewed Reverend Paul Hamilton, an active member of the former group and a community leader. Below are my recommendations.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The staff recommends that Town Council reform the Public Safety Committee. The new group would have specific representation numbers, a defined mission statement, and clear direction and do's and don'ts.

## **COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION:**

It was recommended that the committee be represented from all areas of the town. Possible representation could be as follows:

- One Member from Historic District (Old Town)
- One Member From BIS Area
- One Member from Buckwalter
- One member from 170 / New Riverside Area
- Two Members at large

All members must either live in the town or own a business in the representation area.

## **MISSION STATEMENT:**

Although the precise mission statement needs to be approved by Town Council, below are some suggested ones that will give prospecting committee members an idea of what their function might be.

*“The Public Safety Committee will work collaboratively and proactively to address public safety concerns in the Town of Bluffton. The committee will strive to promote and enhance public safety awareness to all citizens.”*

*“The Public Safety Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the police department and Town Council by bringing to their attention feedback from the community concerning public safety issues and needs. The committee is devoted to facilitating the free flow of ideas and discussions to improve the safety of all citizens.”*

*“To improve the overall safety of the community by recommending and implementing safety initiative, raising community awareness of safety concerns and to serve as a forum for community input on matters of public safety.”*

## **CLEAR DIRECTION:**

The newly formed committee will be tasked with being the ears for the town on all matters concerning public safety. Some ideas for tasks would be:

- Hold regularly, publicly scheduled meeting to solicit input on items affecting public safety
- Be ambassadors for the town on matter of public safety
- Advise the Chief of Police on areas of community concern and help develop potential solutions
- Assist in organizing community wide public safety events, such as National Night Out, Walk to School, Bike Safety, or senior citizen outreach.



The committee would **not**:

- Be a forum for complaints against the police department
- Set policy for the police department
- Deal with personnel matters involving the town
- Represent the Mayor and Council

**PATH FORWARD:**

Staff recommends that this item be discussed at a workshop portion of an upcoming town council meeting and once a clear consensus is reached, the matter will be brought back for a vote. After that, staff would advertise and solicit for members which would require council approval.